

CLAIMS:

1. A method of communicating comprising:
transmitting a text message from a source set top box to an exchange.
2. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
packetizing at the exchange said text message into a plurality of data packets,
wherein said plurality of data packets include said text message, an identifier of said source set top box, an identifier of a destination set top box, and a packet header information; and
forwarding said plurality of data packets to a multiplexor.
3. The method of claim 2, further comprising:
multiplexing said plurality of data packets and audio data and video data into an output transport stream; and
broadcasting said output transport stream to the destination set top box.
4. The method of claim 2, wherein said plurality of data packets are in MPEG-2 format.
5. The method of claim 3, further comprising:
receiving said broadcasted, output transport stream at said destination set top box.
6. The method of claim 1, wherein said transmitting is done via telephone or cable.
7. The method of claim 3, wherein said broadcasting is done via satellite, cable, or wireless.
8. The method of claim 5, wherein said receiving is done via satellite, cable, or wireless.

9. The method of claim 4, further comprising:
demultiplexing said broadcasted, output transport stream at said destination set top box into said text message.
10. A method of communicating comprising:
receiving a text message from a source set top box;
packetizing said text message into a plurality of data packets, wherein said plurality of data packets include said text message, an identifier of a destination set top box, an identifier of said source set top box, and a packet header information; and
forwarding said plurality of data packets to a multiplexor.
11. The method of claim 10, wherein said plurality of data packets are packetized into a MPEG-2 format.
12. The method of claim 10, wherein said receiving is via telephone.
13. The method of claim 10, wherein said receiving is via cable.
14. A method of communicating comprising:
receiving a plurality of text messages, wherein said plurality of text messages originated at a plurality of source set top boxes;
packetizing said plurality of text messages into a plurality of data packets;
multiplexing said plurality of data packets and audio data and video data into an output transport stream; and
broadcasting said output transport stream to a plurality of destination set top boxes.
15. The method of claim 14, wherein said plurality of text messages are received via telephone or cable.
16. The method claim 14, wherein said broadcasting is via satellite, wireless, or cable.

17. The method of claim 14, further comprising:
demultiplexing said broadcasted, output transport stream at said plurality of destination set top boxes into said plurality of text messages.
18. A method of communicating comprising:
receiving a broadcasted, output transport stream including a plurality of data packets on a destination set top box;
demultiplexing said broadcasted, output transport stream at said destination set top box into a text message, wherein said text message originated on a source set top box.
19. The method of claim 18, wherein said receiving is via
satellite, cable, or wireless.
20. A system for communicating comprising:
a service station adapted to receive a plurality of text messages sent from a plurality of source set top boxes, wherein said service station packetizes said plurality of text messages into a plurality of data packets;
a multiplexor in communication with said service station adapted to multiplex said plurality of data packets and audio data and video data into an output transport stream; and
broadcasting means for broadcasting said output transport stream to a plurality of destination set top boxes.
21. The system of claim 20, wherein said broadcasting means is
a satellite.
22. The system of claim 20, wherein said broadcasting means is
cable.
23. The system of claim 20, wherein said broadcasting means is
wireless means.

24. The system of claim 20, wherein said plurality of text messages received by said service station sent from said plurality of source set top boxes are received via telephone or cable.
25. The system of claim 20, further comprising:
a source set top box connected via communication means with said service station.
26. The system of claim 25, wherein said communication means is telephone or cable.
27. The system of claim 20, further comprising:
a destination set top box in communication with said broadcasting means.
28. The system of claim 27, wherein said destination set top box is in communication via satellite, cable, or wireless.
29. A communication system comprising:
transmitting means for transmitting a text message from a source set top box to a packetizing means;
packetizing means for packetizing said text message into a plurality of data packets, wherein said plurality of data packets include said text message, an identifier of said source set top box, and identifier of a destination set top box, and a packet header information;
multiplexing means in communication with said packetizing means for multiplexing said plurality of data packets and audio data and video data into an output transport stream; and
broadcasting means in communication with said multiplexing means for broadcasting said output transport stream to a destination set top box.
30. The communication system of claim 29, wherein said transmitting is done via telephone or cable.

31. The communication system of claim 29, wherein said broadcasting is done via satellite, cable, or wireless.